DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 212 560 SP 019 399

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TITLE Mainstreaming: Who? Why? When? How?
INSTITUTION Central Burlington County Region for Special Education, N.J.
SPONS AGENCY New Jersey State Dept. of Education, Trenton.
PUB DATE 80
NOTE 25p.
AVAILABLE FROM Guidance Awareness Publications, Box 106, Rancocas, NJ 08073 ($2.00).

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Classroom Environment; *Classroom Techniques; Developmental Disabilities; Elementary Secondary Education; Individual Development; Learning Disabilities; *Mainstreaming; Socialization; *Special Education; Student Behavior; *Student Placement; *Teacher Role; Teaching Methods

ABSTRACT

This booklet defines mainstreaming procedures through brief responses to questions on: students that should be mainstreamed; the most effective time for mainstreaming a student; why mainstreaming is effective for children with special needs; and how the move from special education to regular class placement can be facilitated. Profiles are presented of specific experiences of regular teachers in dealing with disabled children in their classrooms. A checklist is provided for identifying seven areas in which learning problems may occur: (1) motor development; (2) visual perception; (3) visual motor (4) spatial organization; (5) regulation behavior; (6) language development; and (7) personality development. A copy of a special education mainstreaming form used to report student progress is included. (JD)

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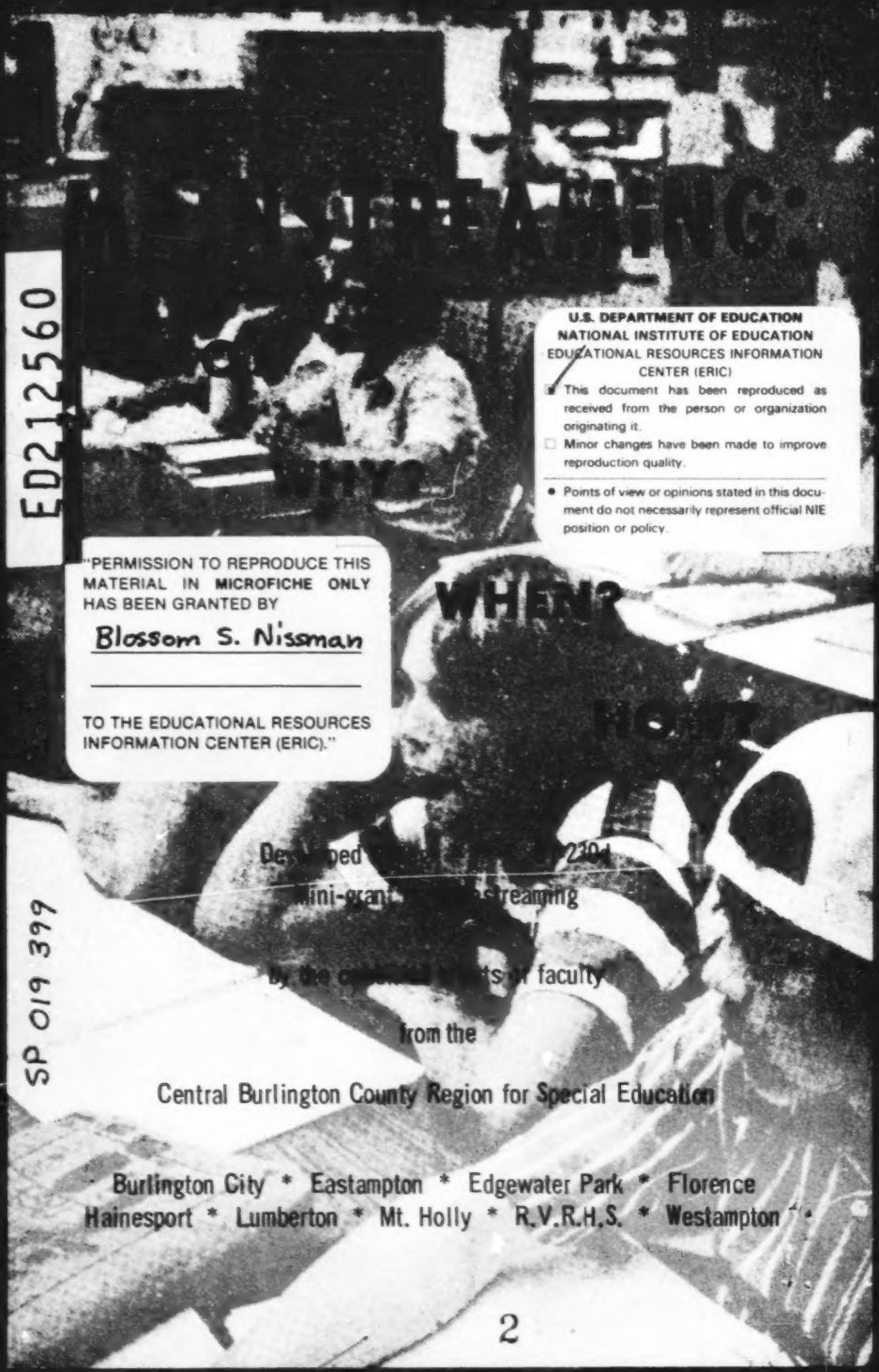

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from the

Central Burlington County Region for Special Education

Burlington City * Eastampton * Edgewater Park * Florence
Hainesport * Lumberton * Mt. Holly * R.V.R.H.S. * Westampton

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Funds for development provided by:

New Jersey Department of Education - P. L. 91-230d - Training Personnel for the Education of the Handicapped. (Mini-Grant for Mainstreaming In-Service.)

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A CURRICULUM FABLE *

One time the animals had a school. The curriculum consisted of running, climbing, flying and swimming, and all the animals took all the subjects.

The Duck was good in swimming, better, in fact, than his instructor, and he made passing grades in flying, but was practically hopeless in running. Because he was low in this subject, he was made to stay in after school and drop his swimming class in order to practice running. He kept this up until he was only average in swimming. But average is acceptable, so nobody worried about that except the Duck.

The Eagle was considered a problem pupil and was disciplined severely. He beat all the others to the top of the tree in climbing class, but he used his own way of getting there.

The Rabbit started out at the top of the class in running, but he had a nervous breakdown and had to drop out of school on account of so much make-up work in swimming.

The Squirrel led the climbing class, but his flying teacher made him start his flying lessons from the ground instead of the top of the tree down, and he developed charley horses from over-exertion at the take-off and began getting C's in climbing, D's in running.

The practical Prairie Dogs apprenticed their offspring to a Badger when the school authorities refused to add digging to the curriculum.

At the end of the year, an abnormal Eel that could swim well, run, climb, and fly a little was made valedictorian of the class.

*

Author unknown. It seemed approriate to include this "fable" for it illustrates clearly the educational theory that all must develop in all areas. Perhaps this will encourage the reader to reassess this philosophy for it unrealistic and impractical and may be partially the cause of much school failure.

INTRODUCTION

If we accept the philosophy that education must be a holistic approach to meeting individual needs, then the MAINSTREAMING concept becomes essentially a part of the management system within the school community.

When we assess individuals, whether through tests, observation, or by measuring actual performance, we find each individual achieves at varying levels of competence and efficiency in each measurable skill. If we define "average" or "normal" as he/she who performs at the pre-determined level of his/her grade designation in all subjects in school, we would have no "average" or "normal" students. Yet this is what the "average" performance of a student is supposed to denote. Realistically, every individual is average in some things, above average in others, and below average in still other areas. This is the holistic view. Therefore, the variance in performance in different skills is what we may expect from the average, or even above average student. In fact, each of us, by true definition can be assessed as learning disabled in some way. THE DEGREE OR THE EXTENT TO WHICH THIS DISABILITY INTERFERES WITH THE LEARNING PROCESS IS SIGNIFICANT TO THOSE OF US INVOLVED IN EDUCATION.

Thus we can say that the labeled learning disabled child, as identified by the Child Study Team as P.I. (Perceptually Impaired,) N.I. (Neurologically Impaired), E.D. (Emotionally Disturbed), C.H. (Communication Handicapped), A.H. (Auditorily Handicapped), etc., needs special assistance in developing a learning modality that will overcome his/her disability or help him/her learn to cope with it so that it does not interfere with other areas of learning and functioning as a productive human being.

The danger lies in the temptation to dwell so heavily on the remediation of the child's disability other skills and competencies are left dormant to be denied normal growth and maturation.

MAINSTREAMING is the procedure that prevents this stagnation of normal skill development by accurately placing the child in varied environs that are appropriate in stimulating learning at all his/her different levels of competence. MAINSTREAMING is, in essence, a custom-made curricular plan that provides exposure to various levels of learning in which the student has demonstrated potential to succeed.

Unfortunately, the concept of MAINSTREAMING can be easily abused by placing a student in an inappropriate class situation. Not only does this prove frustrating to the student but it may easily lead to disruption of the harmony of the group by forcing the classroom teacher to give a disproportionate amount of time to a few students. Therefore, the selection of placement of a child being MAINSTREAMED is critical. This selection needs to be reinforced by clearly defined goals answering

the questions: Why? What? How? - Why is this student being placed in this class? Is it to develop social skills among his/her peers? Is it to build academic competence in a specific subject? What are his/her strengths, weaknesses, goals, objectives - within this area of learning? Is this student capable of working on level in this subject? Is he/she going to be able to function with this group? Is he/she to be expected to progress as rapidly as the group or is the emphasis on learning the major concepts of the subject? How can the teacher specifically meet these goals and objectives? How will they be measured?

This booklet, developed by a cadre of professionals within the Central Burlington County Region for Special Education, will attempt to clearly define the mainstreaming procedures through the detailed response to the questions of WHO? WHEN? WHY? and HOW?. In addition supplementary information and materials will be provided including concrete mainstreaming procedures used by regular and special education teachers in successfully mainstreaming children.

Through the combined efforts and input of the regular classroom teachers, special education classroom teachers, administrators, parents, and students, this booklet has come to fruition. It has been developed to help the educator understand his/her role and provide the most productive and realistic approach to understanding mainstreaming in an attempt to develop the process into a realistic learning experience for each and every individual that would benefit from this special placement.

Blossom S. Nissman, Ed. D.
Regional Coordinator
Project Director

WHO?

When the special education teacher and the Child Study Team plan to MAINSTREAM a child who is presently in a self-contained placement, what are the basic needs this student must have in order to provide maximum success potential? These would include:

1. SELF CONTROL - the student must be able to control himself/herself within the new environment. It will no longer be a place where his/her immediate needs will be responded to. The special education teacher needs to have helped that child to learn to wait, to perform alternate tasks while waiting for assistance from the teacher. Without this ability, there is little chance that the MAINSTREAMING experience will be successful.

2. INDEPENDENT WORKER - it was generally agreed that the student being MAINSTREAMED must have had some experience in working on his/her own. The general classroom cannot continually monitor this student's activities.

3. POTENTIAL FOR SUCCESS IN THAT AREA. After it has clearly been defined as to why the child should be MAINSTREAMED, he/she should have enough of the basic skills already learned in order that he/she has a potential for success. If, within this new environment, the child is again required to be pulled out of the group for special instruction the reason for mainstreaming has been negated.

4. ACCEPTABLE SOCIAL SKILLS - The classroom teacher cannot function if he/she has to spend time disciplining the new entrant into the classroom. The special education student should be familiar with the class rules and clearly understand that if he/she wishes to continue in the class, the rules must be followed.

5. MOTIVATION TOWARD THE PLACEMENT - It is not unusual that the special education teacher and student become dependent upon one another since they work so closely. The teacher is reluctant to release the student for fear he/she will fail and the student responds to the teacher's doubts and prefers to stay in the safety of the "womb of this classroom". Therefore it is largely the teacher's encouragement, the parent's support, the Child Study Team's support, and finally the student's agreement, that it is time to move out into the regular school community. If the student does not want to make this move, and the teacher does not encourage it, when he/she is forced to move outside the class, he/she will surely fail.

The child therefore, that is moved into the MAINSTREAM, must be ready, willing and able.

HOW?

MAINSTREAMING a student is the responsibility of educators. Unless a student is expected to be situated in a special environment all his/her life, he/she must be exposed as soon as possible to normal life experiences. How is this movement from a sheltered, often highly structured, monitored setting to a more independent classroom facilitated most effectively? Those that determine the placement must consider the following factors:

1. KNOW THE STAFF'S STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES. In placing a student, the staff member's personality should be compatible with the students. If the boy or girl functions best in a structured environment, he/she should be placed in such a classroom. If the teacher is hyper-sensitive to handicapped children - in fact finds it impossible to relate to them, it serves no special purpose to mainstream a child into that classroom.

2. KNOW WHAT IS BEING TAUGHT IN THE CLASS. If the student is being mainstreamed to build certain skills he/she has already shown some competence in, do not place that child in a classroom that is not working on those skills. It seems to be almost ridiculous to mention this, but all the grade levels do not move on the same pace nor do they cover the same material, regardless of what the curriculum guide says. Be sure to explore the lesson plans of this class and decide whether or not the area of study is appropriate.

3. CHOOSE COMPATIBLE PEERS. It is important that the child being mainstreamed will be able to relate to the peers in his group. If he is immediately labeled as different the placement will fail. Acceptance socially is vital for without social compatibility he/she will not be comfortable and therefore unable to learn.

4. PREPARE THE STUDENT FOR PLACEMENT. The student needs to know about the new classroom, the name of the teacher, perhaps meet several of the students and have an idea of the material being discussed in class. Some special education teachers have found it helpful to make themselves aware of the subject matter and instruct the student in a parallel program before entry into the classroom so that he/she will be aware of the material the class has already learned and not feel left out or confused. The text book, work papers, etc. can easily be obtained from the classroom teacher. The student that is prepared for the placement, has support of parents and his peers, will have a tremendous chance at success.

5. CLEARLY DEFINE THE RECEIVING TEACHERS ROLE. This must be done by the placement agency - usually the Child Study Team and the special education teacher. What is this teacher expected to demand of this child? Is this a social or academic placement? Most regular classroom teachers will accept a special education student if the reason for placement is clearly identified.

6. AN ON-GOING OPENLINE OF COMMUNICATION AND COOPERATION MUST BE AVAILABLE. It cannot be assumed that the teachers and student will communicate with each other at the appropriate time. Some specific form should be used to facilitate this. Examples of such forms used by several of the special education teachers in the Central Region are provided in this booklet (see Table of Contents). The student needs to feel that he still has a connection to his special education classroom when he is within another environment, and the regular classroom teacher may need to have the help of this special education teacher to reinforce some of the skills he/she is learning. It is important that both teachers feel free to communicate with one another and not be led to believe that this communication is due to distrust or doubt but rather motivated by their mutual concern for providing the best educational experience for the student.

7. THE CLASSROOM TEACHER MUST BE PROVIDED WITH A COMPREHENSIVE I.E.P. (INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL PLAN). The special education teacher and child study team members know the areas of weakness of this student and his/her most favorable learning modality. The classroom teacher should be aware of this information and any other information essential in preventing her/him from negating any learning previously developed in the special environment. If the regular classroom teacher has been given the responsibility of the student's education, he/she should have access to any information that is relevant to the child's academic and social progress.

Considering all the above factors, the student mainstreamed will be provided with conditions that are conducive to the optimum of success.

WHY?

Why mainstream at all? Can't this student, who has these special needs achieve educational success in a self-contained classroom specifically designed for his/her needs far more readily than in a classroom filled with possible frustration and conflict? Surprisingly the answer is no for studies have shown that the isolation in the special classroom does not assure academic success - even with the most sophisticated tools and most competent teachers. Why is this true? The answer is that it is the nature of human beings to want to be part of the masses. It is important to individuals to be individual yet to be part of the overall group - to be accepted and able to compete. The subtle skills of personal interaction among persons of different walks of life, different levels of intelligence and different interests and skills is what makes up a world. All persons want to be productive members of this world. Being isolated and labeled, no matter how we try to disguise it, is a form of stigma placed on the individual and becomes yet one more burden to overcome. Eventually

each individual must leave the protective confines of home and school and enter the world community. Mainstreaming is an introduction to the world community and is essential in helping those students that are part of the program, move back into the regular environment, make a gradual and successful entry as the following objectives are taken into consideration. The WHY of mainstreaming therefore includes:

1. IMPROVEMENT OF SELF-IMAGE. Whether we like to admit it or not, no one likes to be called "special education student". It is accepted because there is no choice. It is ironic that the child that fails in the regular class finds his self-image negative and then is placed in a special class where all in the class have a negative self-image just because they are there. The most difficult job of the special education teacher is to find the talents of these youngsters, bolster them and then move them into a regular environment with these talents ready in order that they will produce a successful experience. That is mainstreaming. The child moved into a regular class without this reinforcement will find yet another failure and another scar upon his/her self-image.

2. ADJUST TO ENVIRONMENT CHANGE. The movement into a regular class means adjustment to a new teacher and new peers. If this movement is made in the middle of a school year it is even more difficult because the group has already formed its rules and regulations among its peers. Mainstreaming provides the opportunity for the youngster to adjust to a new situation and this opportunity should take place under the best conditions. This means planning and most thorough study of the environment as previously stated.

3. TO BUILD ON STRENGTHS. The placement of a mainstreamed youngster must be in an environment where he/she will be reasonably strong. Each of us has a talent. An EMR (Educationally Mentally Retarded) child has been known to star in an art class eventhough he cannot read or write on high school level. This student's strengths were emphasized and as a result he felt worthy. What rules tell us that a person has to read to be an artist?

4. IMPROVE SOCIAL SKILLS. We learn by modeling after others. If students are isolated in an environment where all his/her classmates have the same disability, how can this child ever recognize the normal behavior patterns? Allowing a child to be part of a regular classroom even if for no other reason than to be exposed to normal interaction among peers, is a valid reason for mainstreaming.

5. HELP REGULAR CHILDREN LEARN TO UNDERSTAND THE HANDICAPPED. Children need to learn to be sensitive to the weaknesses of others and the limitations of others. By working side by side with a peer of limited ability,

the normal youngster becomes more comfortable and understanding regarding the differences of others.

6. PREPARE CHILDREN FOR LIFE EXPERIENCES. It is not unusual for children contained in a special classroom to have unrealistic life goals. The slow learner who aspires to be a doctor soons finds, in a regular classroom, that there are many skills that he/she doesn't know that are basic to pursuing this profession. He/she also learns that there are other professions in the medical field that he/she could do and will more readily accept these limitations when faced with the realities as he functions within a group composed of peers with varying skills.

7. PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO COMPETE WITH PEERS. Whether we like to admit it or not, we live in a competitive world and we can only shield our children so long from this competitiveness. The child isolated sees little frustration for he/she is working either completely alone or with others limited in similar skills. In the one or two skills in which this child excells, and all children do, he /she gets an unrealistic picture of his talent for there is no competition. It is in this talent that it is essential that the child be mainstreamed. There are two basic reasons: 1) to prevent stagnation of the talent, and 2) to provide competition with his/her peers to stimuate growth.

MAINSTREAMING therefore is a viable management procedure in the educational process if it is treated with respect. It is one way of providing the least restrictive environment demanded by the P. L. 94-142. It is a procedure that benefits many in the process - teacher, child- peers - parents. It is important for it helps to normalize the school experiences of the child who otherwise would be isolated from the mainstream of school activity.

Several of the following pages present examples of "mainstreaming experiences" as described by teachers involved in the development of this booklet. Some of the children involved have not been officially classified as "special education", but all have the commonality of being "different" in some way from the general class population. And this difference has caused this child to have difficulty either in academic or social progress. Each of these teachers has shown a sensitivity to the individual needs of this child by outwardly caring and responding to this difference by helping the child either adjust to it or change it to a more appropriate alternative. These experiences should help those that read this booklet, to see that every child deserves the best possible opportunity to experience the maximum exposure to learning while in school. Perhaps these techniques can be used to help other teachers walk that extra mile that seems so essential in helping these "special" children achieve success - a much more realistic alternative than isolating the child from realistic life and learning situations.

ACTUAL MAINSTREAMING EXPERIENCES

Experience #1

Contributed by Elizabeth Baird, Burlington City - Regular classroom teacher

In working with a disruptive active child I found that the strengths of this child were in art. He liked games. I had him construct a game board using the KISS theme using multiplication facts. He had to organize, draw, write directions, do the problems for the answer key. He got to check his answers with a calculator. His behavior and self-concept were definitely lifted and I got the idea to use this concept as the basis for my Master's thesis. Thanks to a "different" child our classroom was enriched. Everyone liked and used his game which helped build this child's self esteem immeasurably.

Experience # 2

Contributed by Nancy Knighton, Hainesport - Elementary Special Ed. Teacher

When I first received this little seven year old boy in my room, he was very quiet and withdrawn and had a very negative self-image. He thought of himself as being "bad and stupid" - those were his words. Whenever he made a mistake he would say he was stupid.

After a few months went by and he began to make academic progress in several areas I noticed a marked improvement in his self-image. He was much more outgoing and cheerful and no longer called himself "dumb" or "stupid". Then I showed him some of his old papers and worksheets which he had done from the beginning of the year. When I compared them with some of his more recent work, even he saw the big difference and the improvement he had made. His face literally glowed with pleasure and he looked at me and said, "I guess I'm not stupid anymore!" I don't know who felt better at this point - the child or me - but it was a very rewarding experience.

Experience # 3

Contributed by Sandy Hancock, Rancocas High School, Regular Home Ec. Teacher

One of my mainstreamed students went into a regular Foods I class and was able to show others how to set the table, set up diswashing equipment and details of kitchen cleanliness and organization. She has been accepted into an advanced foods course with teacher recommendations, and hopes to be accepted into a work-study program the following year.

Another experience I had was in a special Home Ec. class I conducted there was a young man who never seemed proud of his work. One day he had made a

holiday cake to take home. Near the end of the period, his mother and aunt appeared in the doorway. He had asked his mother to pick up the cake because he was a bus student and was afraid he couldn't get it home safely. I was delighted to see how much pride he and his family had in his work. I had not realized that his work in school had now become part of his home experiences.

Experience # 4

Marilyn Pasiecznyk, Elementary Special Education Teacher

Sometimes people don't realize that special education children need time to get used to their special education class. Often their problem is not their limited learning ability but rather something else. One of my students had a palsied arm and was blind in one eye. He felt he couldn't play many of the games that his classmates played. The children responded to his shyness by not wanting him on their team. I tried to help him by telling E. about people who played basketball in wheelchairs. He had two good legs and one good arm. He could certainly learn to play basketball. One of the children would go to the gym and practice dribbling and shooting. Eric learned he could be successful at these things. I learned that with patience he could learn to play baseball eventhough he was blind in one eye by standing with his good eye outward he could hit the ball. It was a terrific change seeing this child learn to adapt to compensate for his physical disabilities. With this growth in confidence, mainstreaming was possible.

Experience # 5

Contributed by Mary Stanfield, Middle School Special Ed. Teacher, Mt. Holly.

An eighth grade student was classified and assigned to my special education classroom during the month of May. This student had received several warning letters (that he was failing) during the school year. Knowing that he could disrupt the class and affect the morale of the group since he entered so late in the year, I decided to emphasize to the student that he was only placed in my class in order to try to aid him in passing the eighth grade, thereby progressing on to highschool. In other words, I would be giving him special tutoring and while he was in my room he can help me in the subjects in which he excells. I later found out that the student really likes Social Studies and has a skill for remembering events. This young man appears to look forward to his tutoring sessions and also he enjoys acting as my aide when I teach Social Studies. He works well with the other students and now appears to feel that he is accomplishing something. I feel that I provided for this student the support he needed in order that he may be mainstreamed back into the regular classroom in the new semester.

Experience # 6

Contributed by Joan Williams, Regular Fourth Grade Teacher, Lumberton

I teach a fourth-grade self-contained classroom. On the first day of school I learned that my new group for the year included an Iranian child who spoke very little English. I tried, at once, to help N. become familiar with some very basic American ideas. It was probably the second day of school when I was standing over her, explaining to her, when N. quickly jumped up and said, "Excuse me." She went to my reading table and secured a chair. She put the chair by me and announced that I was to sit. Needless to say I was astounded by her manners and idea, and it certainly pleased me.

Several weeks passed, and by this time N. was becoming one of the gang. After a play period, several students complained about N. not playing correctly, being loud, etc. She understood well enough to know what was happening and was obvously crushed. At this point I told the class it was a good time to tell them a little story. I went back to the second day of school telling them about N.'s politeness and consideration and how rare it is. They certainly got the point and ended up clapping and making N. feel like she was accepted again in their eyes.
It was a kind of mainstreaming to bring a child who was foreign to the group into the group as an acceptable member.

Experience # 7

Contributed by Honey Levin - Regular Classroom Teacher, Edgewater Park

When I have a child that is being mainstreamed into my class that has difficulty in reading I have found success by using the following techiniques: 1) Read a selection to them first, then let them read it. This way they hear the rhythm of the sentence and get the meaning 2) I read the selection leaving out words periodically, and each child takes his/her turn reading the missing words. It is important to establish an order with the children so that they know when to take their turn reading the word. 3) I have children take turns reading selections out loud that they are familiar with such as Ten Little Indians or Old MacDonald, etc. They could even illustrate these and share them with the class.

I also have found some techniques helpful in classroom management for mainstreamed youngsters. These include: 1) meet with the children individually periodically just to see if they are having any problems they've been reluctant to discuss with the other children around. 2) Sometimes when certain children are having trouble getting along, or any problem arises in the class, have a class meeting. I bring these problems to the attention of all the students and let them openly discuss them. This brings the child into the group and the problems becomes a sharing of group responsibility.

In creative writing I have used Bill Martin's program Sounds of Language very successfully with mainstreamed youngsters. I have children read poems with a definite pattern. Then I have them write their own poem by copying the pattern of the poet, yet filling in their own words. For example for Ten Little Indians they could write "One big, two big, three big elephants..." It introduces them to creativity.

Experience # 8

Contributed by Nora Carpenter, Elementary Special Education Teacher, Hainesport

It is so important that the special education child develop confidence in himself and learn to interact with others. I think that is a primary goal of the special education teacher in preparation for mainstreaming. My experience with such a situation was encountered my first year of teaching. This particular child resented me taking over the class. He was very attached to the teacher who I replaced. Working with him daily on a one to one basis I found out why he resented me. He found good friends hard to find. He felt he was not loved or wanted. He felt he was not successful. His parents put a great deal of pressure on him.

I tried many approaches : counseling, working with the parents, being a good friend, etc. I really felt that all was lost and somehow all my efforts were useless for I got very little positive response from the child. He remained passive in his behavior toward me. Eventually he moved away and shortly afterward I recevied a very touching letter from him in which he wrote: " I think about you very much and I cry every day because I miss you very much". That was all I needed for I felt I had accomplished one thing - trust. Through being consistent and honest and caring I had develop a foundation for an understanding of friendship for this child. Perhaps this experience in a trusting relationship helped this child make a better adjustment to his new school. I wrote him and hope my encouraging letter reinforced this improved underatanding of relationships of one person to another.

Experinece # 9

Contributed by Rita Pepper, Regular Classroom Teacher, Florence

An eleven year old boy I had mainstreamed into my classroom hardly talked at all. He would answer reading questions but wouldn't volunteer any outside information to the class or me. Finally, he loosened up by the end of the year and brought up some of the pictures he'd drawn. He was a little apprehensive about showing them to me and the group. The children were delighted and amazed and saw him in a completely different light from then on. This helped him feel more relaxed and he began to offer more personal information and opinions from then on. I found that it was helpful to let him be seen by the class as someone special in a positive way and his talent in art seemed to be the answer. It is important therefore, that when a child is brought into a class to be mainstreamed, he be given an opportunity to show his peers that he is capable of doing something well - perhaps even better than they. Through this procedure a mutual respect develops. Eventhough it was not an art class, flexibility allowed for this student to feel comfortable in his new class and thus more able to learn.

Experience # 10

Contributed by Beverly Maby, Special Elementary Teacher, Roebling School

As a special education teacher of a P.I. class, I sometimes have difficulty encouraging my students to move into a regular class in the mainstreaming process. They seem to finally feel secure and comfortable in the special class arrangement and worry about failing again. My most memorable experience dealing with this problem brings to mind the encouragement I gave to a thirteen year old boy in asking him to apply for placement in the Vocational School. The child was insecure about it and I encouraged him and his family to apply. He was accepted. This Christmas I received a card from him and his family. They told me he will be an electrician at the end of this year and asked me to save all my electrical work for him! I know that this young man would never have dared to apply to the competitive Vocational School without someone strongly reinforcing this application. I am glad that I was the one that had that opportunity to influence his future.

Experience #11

Contributed by Bill Allen, Teacher of the Multiply Handicapped, Burlington City

One of the most difficult problems I feel special education teachers have is to develop a positive self image of the student placed in the special class. Unless this is achieved, this student's chances of success in the mainstreaming placement is minimal. I had such a student that was giving me and everyone else a pretty hard time in regard to learning. I knew that his changing attitude was crucial if he were to make any progress. This eleven year old boy started crying one day in class and saying to himself "I'm stupid, I'm stupid and I'll always be stupid!" as he was confronted with a problem he could not immediately understand. I decided to respond immediately although he wasn't talking directly to anyone. I told the class to take a short break and play checkers or go to an interest corner to work quietly and I asked J. to come to the desk. We talked for about ten minutes. In that period I told J. , "I can't make a watch, nor build an airplane, nor can I fly a rocket." Yet with all these things I pointed out to him I assured him that I did not feel stupid but rather anxious to learn more for I realized how much I have yet to learn. When we finished talking there were many things said that would make me appear stupid according to J.'s original definition of the word. The point here is that many times we professionals need to step down to reality and show that we too are imperfect and subordinate ourselves so we become real and attainable as a model to our students. J. now feels that he just needs to study a little harder, and that he is a long way from being "stupid". He is closer now to being mainstreamed.

LEARNING PROBLEMS CHECKLIST
FOR THE CLASSROOM TEACHER

There seems to be a great deal of confusion regarding the identification of children with special needs. It was the general consensus of this planning committee that it would be helpful to the classroom teacher if the special class teachers developed some form of checklist so that a special child would be identified early and thus remediated rapidly.

Some children have difficulty in learning which distinguishes them from others in their class. This checklist was developed by Terry Melegari, and Mary Stanfield from Mt. Holly and Rose Taylor from Hamilton Township. It's sole purpose is to help the classroom teacher effectively identify children who may have a learning deficiency so that these children can be referred to the Child Study Team for evaluation. The teacher should keep in mind that isolated evidence of a minimal number of these "symptoms" is certainly not significant but, that this can serve as a guideline to help the classroom teacher become more sensitive to individual needs. Teachers who become aware of significant difficulty in any of these areas should certainly follow-up these concerns through their district's referral procedures. The classroom teacher is the primary key to a child's educational success. Perhaps this information will help the teacher respond to questions previously unanswered.

LEARNING PROBLEMS CHECKLIST

MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

1. Awkward in running and climbing.
2. Awkward in balance - standing on one foot, walking on line or beam.
3. Rigid movements.
4. Flaccid (limp body movements).
5. Lacks smoothness in walking up and down stairs.
6. Difficulty in hopping and skipping.
7. Difficulty in learning movements and movement sequence in games.
8. Lacks smoothness in clapping, tapping, etc., in rhythm.
9. Poor posture.
10. Easily fatigued.
11. Difficulty in cutting, pasting, coloring.
12. Hold chalk/pencil awkwardly.
13. Strokes too heavily or lightly.
14. Works very slowly on simple pencil-paper tasks.

VISUAL PERCEPTION (interpreting visual stimuli)

1. Difficulty in matching (interpreting likenesses) color, form, shape, size.
2. Difficulty in discriminating differences - color, form shape, size.
3. Attention focused on irrelevant detail.

4. Confuses foreground-background.
5. Difficulty recognizing what's missing.
6. Frequently loses place on work page.
7. Difficulty with visual memory.
8. Difficulty in interpreting reversible letters or words.

VISUAL MOTOR (production related to visual stimuli)

1. Must feel things or run fingers over page before reacting.
2. Difficulty in assembling simple puzzles.
3. Difficulty staying on line or within boundaries.
4. Poor orientation of drawings on paper.
5. Poor spacing of drawing or writing.
6. Difficulty in making simple forms.
7. Difficulty in copying simple patterns.
8. Cramped or sprawled writing.
9. Reverses or rotates angles, letters or words.

SPACIAL ORGANIZATION (laterality, directionality, time, space)

1. Disoriented in room, building or playground.
2. Untidy with clothing, desk, papers.
3. Inconsistent hand preference.
4. Confusion of left and right.
5. Poor knowledge of body parts.
6. Confusion with directionality (near-far, front-behind, above-below).
7. Feels or looks at chair before sitting.
8. Reaches too far out or short for things.
9. Holds hands in wrong position for catching.
10. Reacts too quickly or slowly to moving stimuli (like a ball thrown to him).
11. Disoriented in time.
12. Misjudges distances in play and work activities
13. Difficulty with sequence.

REGULATION BEHAVIOR

1. Distractability - limited ability to screen out irrelevant stimuli, therefore has difficulty in focusing on talk.
2. Hyperactivity - restless activity (twisting, squirming, always up and down, tapping fingers or feet.)
3. Hypoactivity- lethargic (seems to lack interest or motivation to learn through moving.)
4. Perservation - repeats excessively some words or actions without "apparent" reason; gets stuck on some letter, or sound, or word; seems to need security of repeating same word or action over and over again.
5. Disinhibition - grabs; puts hands where they don't belong; little regard

for danger; can't wait - runs out of line; has to be first; little regard for regulations.

6. Impulsivity - irresistible reactions to stimuli (focuses on paper to be rattled, walls to be fingered, books to be slammed, unusual sounds to be made, etc.).
7. Significant variation in performance levels from hour to hour, day to day.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

1. Does not enjoy verbal games.
2. Difficulty in recognizing differences in sounds or words presented verbally.
3. Difficulty in identifying rhymes.
4. Difficulty in understanding verbal directions.
5. Difficulty expressing thoughts.
6. Difficulty understanding meaning of words.
7. Difficulty in classifying or categorizing.
8. Difficulty finishing incomplete words.
9. Difficulty in blending separate parts of a word into a whole word.
10. Difficulty with sentence structure or grammatic form.
11. Difficulty reproducing from memory sequences presented verbally.

PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

1. Daydreams.
2. Preoccupied with certain themes such as violence, desertion, etc.
3. Exaggerated emotional responses (cries too easily, laughs too loud, fears).
4. Nervous traits and mannerisms such as nail biting, thumb sucking, pencil chewing and the like.
5. Insecurity - needs constant approval.
6. Rigidity- resists changes in routine.
7. Seems to have difficulty in being accepted by peers.
8. Overly bold and aggressive.

Bibliography

Farrar, Dr. D. T. and James Schoedler, "An Ounce of Prevention", Early Years.

Johnson, Doris and H. R. Myklebust, Learning Disabilities

Myklebust, H. R. ed. The Pupil Rating Scale, Screening for Learning Disabilities.

SPECIAL EDUCATION MAINSTREAMING FORM

In order to facilitate the most effective communication between those involved with the mainstreamed child, Mt. Holly School District developed this form.

Special Education Mainstreaming Form - F. W. Holbein School

To: Team Chairperson, Section _____

Reference: _____ Date _____
student' name

The student whose name appears above has been mainstreamed into the following subject areas:

( ) English
( ) Science
( ) Social Science
( ) Reading
( ) Math

As required by Memo, dated September 2, 1975, request completion of the following check-list.

_____ Date: _____
Special Education Teacher

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1. Courtesy				
2. Cooperation				
3. Effort				
4. Accomplishment				
5. Behavior				

(form continued next page)

(form continued)

5. Comments and/or other areas:

_____ date: ____

Team Chairperson

(please submit copy to Guidance Dept.)

This form is used to keep an ongoing report on the development of the student's work and behavior in the regular classroom as reported to the Special education teacher.

This demands a constant awareness on the part of the special education teacher in regard to this placement. Since the special education teacher has greater flexibility in his/her program than the regular classroom teacher, it is important that he/she accept as his/her responsibility the communication up-date on each of the students mainstreamed.

SUMMARY

Is mainstreaming the answer? It is difficult to say because we are not completely clear on the question. Does containing children in special placement handicap their growth and development? Some studies say yes. Yet, these same children placed in the mainstream often fail there also. Is there a compromise? We believe we have found a viable answer. A child that is mainstreamed must be ready to move into that level of learning or that social situation with a functioning capacity equal to that of the other students in the class. ALL CHILDREN CANNOT BE MAINSTREAMED. ALL CHILDREN ARE NOT EQUALLY SKILLED IN ALL AREAS. Therefore the competencies of the child should be clearly defined. Any competencies that would enable the child to function in a regular class should be immediately reinforced by placement in the regular class. The child should be reinforced in this placement by the special education teacher to whom he returns on a scheduled basis. The special education class for this child should be in the form of a Resource Room or Skills Center in which the child is exposed to specific skills identified as needing reinforcement. Mainstreaming should vary in time and intensity. It may be for one hour a day or less or it may be for almost all the day's activities. It may focus on development of social as well as academic skills.

It is essential that the teachers, all the teachers, involved in teaching this student, be in constant contact with each other, in order that the child will have the benefit of a cohesive and meaningful learning program.

All aspects of the child's learning disability should be taken into consideration before placement in order to assure maximal success for the student. Re-entry into a regular classroom is a traumatic experience for any student. It is a second chance to become part of the group. The mainstreamed child must be given every opportunity to succeed and must be completely aware of the goals and objectives established with the new teacher in regard to this placement. Mainstreaming is a team effort which involves teachers, administrators, Child Study Team Members, parents, and the child himself. Each member of this team should be respected for his/her input. Then and only then, will mainstreaming be an effective management tool within the school community.

ADDENDUM:

This is your guidebook developed to meet your needs. What are your suggestion? questions? comments? that the group can respond to in order to make this a useful tool?

Please list them here:

SUGGESTIONS ** COMMENTS *** CRITICISMS *** NOTES ***